

Wallpaper*

Hotel Walther celebrates 110-year legacy with an art-led makeover

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Selected paintings by Italian artist Sandro Fabbrì adorn the walls of the newly refurbished Hotel Walther in Pontresina, Switzerland. *Photography: Reto Guntli. Courtesy of Hotel Walther*

A mountain village in Switzerland is an unlikely location for cutting-edge culture, but in Pontresina, in the Engadin region of Switzerland – famed for its large Belle-Époque hotels – the historic Hotel Walther has unveiled some avant-garde art to rival Zurich’s blue-chip galleries, as part of an extensive, multi-million makeover.

A triumphant 110 years after it welcomed its first guests into its reception area, visitors in 2017 will step in and be greeted by a gigantic cube, carved from a 20.5 tonne piece of marble. It is the creation of a relatively unknown Swiss sculptor and architect, Veit Rausch, framed by lush and lavish [textiles](#) and furnishings, part of the hotel’s striking transformation by Virginia Maissen, the interior designer who has worked her magic on Hotel Adler, Cafe Oscar and Airport Hotel Basel in the past.



Hotel Walther in Pontresina, Switzerland

In the bar and smoker's lounge, the hotel commissioned Swiss artist Rolf Sachs to create an installation responding to the history of the space and its function in the present, while bringing the right atmosphere for drinking. The result is *Splendurir* (meaning 'pouring light'), comprising 77 hanging lights, perforated buckets and milk jugs, a quiet nod to local mountain traditions and a knowing tip of the hat to those with a glass seated below.

On the walls are paintings by Sandro Fabbri, another off-beat artist with an experimental and eclectic style that dovetails [illustration](#), calligraphy and design. While the largest work installed at Walther is a landscape scene depicting hyperreal snow-capped peaks, picking up on the deep romanticism and grandeur of the hotel's spectacular exterior, around the bar itself, a more playful, contemporary mood is conjured by Fabbri's fluid, spontaneous lines. The series of seven illustrative vignettes form a desultory storyboard that perhaps becomes clearer as the alcohol works its own magic.



The reception area features a marble cube carved from a 20.5 tonne piece by sculptor and architect Veit Rausch. *Photography: Reto Guntli. Courtesy of Hotel Walther*



The entry hall, reception area, bar/fumoir, and dining room (pictured) have been designed by Virginia Maissen. *Photography: Reto Guntli. Courtesy of Hotel Walther*



The hotel has commissioned a lighting installation (left) by Rolf Sachs for the new bar. *Photography: Reto Guntli. Courtesy of Hotel Walther*



Specially designed wall tapestries, curtains, and carpets have also been added to complement the furnishings with warm oak tone. *Photography: Reto Guntli. Courtesy of Hotel Walther*